

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY S/R:ORM:CCPAPPAS:CAF

APPROVED BY S/R:FLKELLOGG

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NEA/IAI - MR. CLUVERIUS (INFO)

EUR/WE-MS. SHIRLEY (INFO)

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TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 211294

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, BE

SUBJECT: INFLUX OF EX-SOVIET JEWS INTO BELGIUM FROM ISRAEL

REF: BRUSSELS 7289; STATE 206318

1. ALFRED CAHEN, BELGIAN EMBASSY DCM, CALLED ON AMB. KELLOGG SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY FOR REFUGEE AND MIGRATION AFFAIRS. CAHEN, ACTING ON INSTRUCTIONS WAS INQUIRING ABOUT US FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SOVIET REFUGEES IN BELGIUM AND THEIR ADMISSION INTO US.

2. CAHEN FIRST ASKED ABOUT FINANCIAL SUPPORT. HE HAD BEEN INFORMED BY GOB THAT USRP ASSISTANCE TO VOLUNTARY AGENCIES (CARITAS AND TOLSTOY) WAS BEING STOPPED. AMB. KELLOGG REPLIED THAT FUNDS WERE SHORT; IT POSSIBLE THAT CONGRESS WOULD PROVIDE CONTINUING RESOLUTION AUTHORITY TO CONTINUE SUPPORT TO VOLAGS HELPING RESETTLE SOVIET REFUGEES; THAT OTHER FUNDING ALTERNATIVE AVAILABLE AND BEING EXPLORED AND
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WE HOPEFUL THAT THERE WILL BE NO INTERRUPTION IN SUPPORT

OF VOLAGS.

3. CAHEN THEN TURNED TO PROBLEM OF HOLDERS OF LAISSEZ PASSERS AND ISRAELI PASSPORTS. HE SAID THAT BELGIAN GOVERNMENT COULD SLOW DOWN OR PROHIBIT ENTRY OF HOLDERS OF LAISSEZ PASSERS. HOWEVER, NO RESTRICTIONS COULD BE PLACED ON ENTRY OF PASSPORT HOLDERS BECAUSE OF RECIPROCAL VISA ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND BELGIUM. WE EXPLAINED THAT IN GENERAL, HOLDERS OF LAISSEZ PASSERS ARE STILL CONSIDERED REFUGEES FROM THE SOVIET UNION AS THEY USUALLY HAVE NOT BEEN FIRMLY RESETTLED IN ISRAEL. ON THE OTHER HAND, HOLDERS OF ISRAELI PASSPORTS NOT GENERALLY ELIGIBLE FOR ENTRY INTO US AS REFUGEES BUT MUST ENTER AS IMMIGRANTS.

4. CAHEN SAID THAT BELGIAN GOVERNMENT WAS TRYING TO ENCOURAGE SOVIET REFUGEES TO MAKE UP THEIR MINDS QUICKLY CONCERNING ULTIMATE COUNTRY OF RESETTLEMENT. MANY TAKE WEEKS BEFORE COMING TO SUCH A DECISION THUS GREATLY LENGTHENING THEIR WAITING PERIOD IN BELGIUM. IN FACT, ACCORDING HIS FIGURES, 18 PEOPLE ONLY APPLIED FOR US ENTRY; 28 FOR RESIDENCE IN BELGIUM, WE AGREED THAT ONLY SMALL NUMBER OF PEOPLE HAD ACTUALLY REGISTERED AND INDICATED COUNTRY OF RESETTLEMENT WITH VOLAGS, AND THAT VOLAGS WERE BEING ENCOURAGED HASTEN REGISTRATION AND RESETTLEMENT PROCESSING. WE ASKED FOR DATA ON NUMBERS OF SOVIET REFUGEES IN BELGIUM, NUMBERS OPTING TO REMAIN THERE PERMANENTLY AS WELL AS NUMBERS EMIGRATING TO OTHER COUNTRIES; PROPORTION OF BEARERS OF LAISSEZ PASSERS AS OPPOSED TO PASSPORT HOLDERS.

5. AMB. KELLOGG EXPRESSED HOPE THAT BELGIUM WOULD CONTINUE TO BE RESPONSIVE TO PLIGHT OF SOVIET REFUGEES AND CONTINUE TO OFFER TEMPORARY ASYLUM. CAHEN STATED THAT PUBLIC OPINION IN BELGIUM WOULD NOT SUPPORT ANY OTHER POLICY. KISSINGER

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